



Signature Sunsets

Initiatives To Advance Learning About End of Life

There will not be a Signature Sunsets program or discussion session this month. Instead, you are invited to attend a special presentation by a palliative care physician to enlighten folks about medical aid in dying. The hybrid (**in-person and online**) program is presented by the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Greater Rochester (FCAGR). Everyone is welcome to take advantage of this salient opportunity to learn about an option that could become relevant for you and your life companions at some point in the future.

Saturday, June 6: Refreshments **9:30 am**

Program **10:00 am-12:00 pm** EDT



In-person Location:

Valley Manor

1530 East Avenue, Rochester NY, 14610



As of August 5th, medical aid in dying will be a realistic option for New York residents. It is progressively emerging as an option in other states around the country as well, where legislation has either been passed or is underway. Though New York state processes and protocols will be a primary focal point, information applicable anywhere can be gleaned from content presented.

New York's Medical Aid in Dying Act was signed into law in February and will take effect in August 2026. This presentation will explore how patients with terminal illness define and respond to suffering, and how they may respond with agency, including at times the wish to hasten their death. We will place MAiD in its national context and anticipated local scope, and consider the range of moral responses among patients, families, and clinicians. We will walk through the law and process, including eligibility, safeguards, steps involved, medications, timing, and what to expect in practice. And there will be plenty of time for open discussion.

Speaker: Rob Horowitz, MD

Earned board certifications in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and Hospice & Palliative Medicine, and served as chief of the Palliative Care Division at Strong Memorial Hospital from 2015 to 2023. At the University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry, Dr. Horowitz teaches medical students, residents, fellows, and interdisciplinary clinicians in palliative care and serious illness communication.

Parking:

Use the 1530 East Ave. entrance (not the 1570 one). It will be marked by signage and balloons, leading to a parking lot close to the entrance. A short walk via a patio will take you directly to the room designated for this event.

RSVP Request (only if attending in person):

Email Marjorie at funeralalliancerochester@gmail.com or call 585-749-5346

If you do not RSVP, but decide at the last minute you would like to attend, feel free to come.



Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89494292143?pwd=vaff50782kTbAzVcRHhvn5hvl02DhS.1>

Meeting ID: 894 9429 2143

Passcode: 711956

June 2, 8:00-9:30 pm EDT

**With Dignity and Compassion:
Jewish Wisdom for the End of Life - Part II**

What does Jewish tradition teach us about how to approach the end of life with dignity, compassion, and care? Across centuries, Jewish texts and practices have created a framework that honors both the individual and the community, offering guidance in moments that can feel uncertain or overwhelming.

In partnership with the Melton School, this three-part course invites learners into a thoughtful exploration of Jewish end-of-life practices. Through close reading of classical texts and liturgy, we will uncover how Jewish tradition responds to the emotional, spiritual, and communal needs that arise at the end of life, and how these practices continue to shape Jewish life today.

With Rabbi Stuart Kelman,
Founding Dean Emeritus of the Gamliel Institute. He is a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary and has taught at the Hebrew Union College.



Sponsored by Jewish Association for Death Education

Registration (free):

<https://jadeinfo.org/event-schedule-all-events>

Wednesday, June 3, 1:00-2:00 EDT

You're grieving your spouse. They're grieving their parent.
You don't have to navigate both alone.

Webinar will address how early parent loss shapes our lives long after childhood, how to help children experiencing the early loss of a parent, and more.

For people who hold grief – professionally, personally, or both, for anyone who wants to better understand how early parent loss³ continues to shape adult grief.

Presented by parent-loss experts, Hope Edelman and David Kessler

Hope's work has supported generations of people in understanding how the death of a parent in childhood can continue to shape a life – from adolescence into adulthood, parenting, and every transition along the way. David Kessler is one of the world's foremost grief experts, the founder of Grief.com, and the author of *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*.

Registration (free):

https://www.davidkesslertraining.com/epl-oi-2026-spouse?utm_medium=paid&utm_source=fb&utm_id=52553193716471&utm_content=52567389876471&utm_term=52567389876271&utm_campaign=52553193716471&fbclid=IwY2xjawSIFG9leHRuA2FlbQEwAGFkaWQAAC_PTKWz93NydGMGYXBwX2lkEDlyMjAzOTE3ODgyMDA4OTIAAR5ejrbPci6FU_3a3AiO2iy2w4KaAznvvpPTxdOljCYYAhONaB2433x5fAxPXg_aem_45K5KU02nnBsUqJR6xZpFA

Thursday, June 4, 11:30 am-1:00 pm EDT

What to Say, and Not Say, to the Grieving

Someone you care about has suffered a loss. You want to support them. Instinctively, you want to offer comfort but don't know what to say. Then, in a moment of emotional awkwardness and with the best of intentions, you say something like:

“He's in a better place.”

“There is a reason for everything.”

“Aren't you over him yet? He's been dead for a while now?”

“You can still have another child?”

“She was such a good person that God wanted her to be with him.”

“I know how you feel.”

You meant no harm; however, what you just said was neither helpful nor supportive! So, what do you say, and what do you NOT say to someone grieving?



When you attend this webinar, you'll learn:



- 64 of the Worst Things You Can Say and How to Avoid Them
- 64 of the Best Things You Can Say and the Best Ways to Say Them
- Why Grief is a Journey, NOT a Destination
- How to “Companion” the Griever on Their Journey Through the Wilderness of Grief
- Six Common Grief Emotions and How They Impact a Griever’s Daily Life
- How to Deal with the Physical Symptoms of Grief
- 6 Grief Myths and How They Can Prevent the Griever from Moving Forward.

Content is based on two books: *What to Say When You Don't Know What to Say - Loving a Friend Through Grief*, by Mark J. Lucero and *Sympathy and Condolences: What to Say and Write to Convey Your Support After a Loss*, by Alan Wolfelt, PH.D.

Hosted by AARP Texas

Registration (free):

[https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-604-Grief/regProcessStep1?
i=Av6xw_RSHEGipryuTKMOMw&rp=d15ef767-3b43-47df-ba16-317bd1fba1f0](https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-604-Grief/regProcessStep1?i=Av6xw_RSHEGipryuTKMOMw&rp=d15ef767-3b43-47df-ba16-317bd1fba1f0)

Monday, June 8, 7:00-8:00 pm EDT

A Year and a Day:

The Fragile Beauty of the Cemeteries of New Orleans

The cemeteries of New Orleans are unlike anywhere else in the world. They exhibit a fragile beauty, telling the stories of the countless immigrants who made this city their home. Influenced by European and Caribbean sensibilities, New Orleans cemetery monuments have captivated storytellers. These “Cities of the Dead” are filled with ornate tombs and personalized stones that echo an architectural artistry and are adorned with cultural traditions. From the hauntingly beautiful, tree-lined mausoleums of the Garden District cemeteries to the poignant, lichen-covered monuments of St. Louis No. 1, they chronicle the stories of this rich, multicultural city.

The talk will explore the remarkable cemetery monuments, their cultural influences, and the unique challenges of the cemeteries of New Orleans.

Presented by JR Pepper, adjunct professor of art history at CUNY Brooklyn College, photographer, digital imaging specialist and cemetery tour guide. She is the photographer and author of two books on cemeteries, including *Buried Boston: America's Revolutionary Necropolis* and her most recent, *Buried New Orleans: The Resilient Cemeteries of the Crescent City*.



Sponsored by Morbid Anatomy

Registration (\$8.00):

<https://www.morbidanatomy.org/events-tickets/p/online-talk-a-year-and-a-day-the-fragile-beauty-of-the-cemeteries-of-new-orleans-with-jr-pepper>

A link to a recording of this talk will be sent to ticket holders after its conclusion.

Tuesday, June 9, 8:00-9:30 pm EDT

With Dignity and Compassion:
Jewish Wisdom for the End of Life - Part III

Jewish End-of-Life Practices in Moed Katan

A study of foundational rabbinic teachings on burial and mourning. Through selected texts, we will explore how Jewish law understands grief, ritual, and community, and what the connection between mourning and festival life reveals about Jewish tradition.

Presented by David Zinner, a co-president and founder of JADE and the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Registration (free):

<https://jadeinfo.org/event-schedule-all-events>



June 10, 1:00-2:30 pm EDT

Canvas of the Heart: Creating Queer Legacies

Less Fear | More Fierce: Queer End-of-Life Planning
LGBTQ+ Centric Online Discussion Series

What does it mean to leave a legacy that's as unapologetically queer as the life you lived?

This thought-provoking and imaginative session centers on legacy-making and creative expression at the end of life.

We'll discuss art-making, memory work, and how grief itself can be a generative process. Participants will be invited to begin their own small legacy projects.



Sponsored by Talk Death, Cornelius, NC

Registration (free):

<https://www.talkdeath.com/events/>

Wednesday, June 10, 5:00-6:00 pm EDT

Choosing Between Dementia & Death: Why I Chose, What I Chose

A dementia patient who is still lucid has a choice: to continue living with dementia or to end their life. Not to choose is to choose living with dementia. As a dementia patient I've made my choice.

Dementia destroys. It can destroy the patient's ability to function. It can destroy the patient's family physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, financially, and in their own development as they try to fulfill the patient's needs.

Death destroys. It destroys every now and every moment of the future of the patient and the world the patient lives in.

In the turbulence of facing dementia the patient may not consider the choice they have of continuing their life as their condition deteriorates, or of ending their life while they are still capable of deciding and doing. During my dementia journey I've made this choice, a choice that is completely personal and is based on considerations which are different for every person. I choose death.

This session does not advocate any position or action in any way. I'll present the process of choosing between dementia and death that I've gone through, and then the session will be opened for conversation.

Hosted by Wally Klatch: <https://letsreimagine.org/collaborators/wally-klatch>

Registration (free):

<https://letsreimagine.org/76768/choosing-between-dementia-death-why-i-chose-what-i-chose>

Wednesday, June 10, 7:00-9:00 pm EDT

Lullaby for the Grieving: How Poetry Came to Meet My Grief

When I lost my father in 2021, I did not know how to see myself or my life anymore. I was a stranger to myself. As a poet, writing and reading had helped me find my way through other trials of life, and this time, although it was harder, reading poetry and allowing myself to write about my grief and the myriad emotions that I experienced in it started to form something of a mirror so I could see myself again.

In this session, I'll read some work from my newest collection, *Lullaby for the Grieving* and the work of other poets who have been a needed mirror. I will also share some elements of craft and form which were useful to me in articulating my experience. We will spend time writing and/or generating ideas based upon a few simple prompts.



Presented by Ashley M. Jones, Poet Laureate Emerita of Alabama (2022-2026), author of four poetry collections.

Sponsored by Evermore

Registration (\$15.):

<https://evermore.org/event/lullaby-for-the-grieving-how-poetry-came-to-meet-my-grief/>

Thursday, June 11, 10:00 am EDT

Conversations with Leaders: Understanding Palliative Care

Palliative care is often misunderstood, yet it plays an important role in supporting quality of life for people living with serious illness and those who care for them.

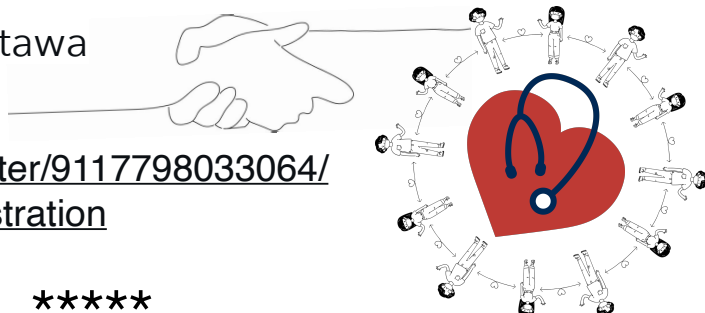
Dr. James Downar and Louise Hanvey will explore what palliative care is, address common myths and misconceptions, and discuss the different types of care and supports available in Ottawa and beyond. Together, they will reflect on how palliative care can support people in hospitals, hospices, and at home, while also highlighting current research and emerging conversations shaping the future of care.

The discussion will conclude with an opportunity for audience questions.

Sponsored by Compassionate Ottawa

Registration (free):

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9117798033064/WN_O5ksIJ0-SN2Mkbbwla2gnA#/registration



Thursday, June 11, 11:30 am-1:00 pm EDT

Understanding the Guilt of Grief

Guilt, regret, and anger are common feelings in grief. The finality of death allows no more time for apologizing or making amends. There's no longer room for second chances.

And so, for many griever, it's normal to ponder "if-onlys" and experience the pain of mistakes made and opportunities squandered. Yet shining the healing light of understanding and forgiveness on the guilt, regret, and anger in grief is within your power.

If you befriend and find restorative ways to express these natural feelings, they will soften. This webinar offers the compassionate insights and tools you need to embrace and restoratively express guilt, regret, and anger after a loss.

Content is based on *The Guilt of Grief: How to Understand, Empress and Restoratively Express Guilt and Regret After Loss*
by Alan D Wolfelt, PH.D.

Visit [Center for Loss](#) to learn more about his work.

Hosted by AARP Texas

Registration (free):

https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-611-Guilt/regProcessStep1?i=Nk5r-w0UBkKCm_ppzgjnmw&rp=1916a3b3-3b9e-4715-8e20-ef6334e3f85e

Thursday, June 11, 8:00 pm EDT

**Marking Thresholds: How altar making, ritual, and creativity
can help people consciously honor life transitions**

A focus on altar making as a way of recognizing transitions and moments of change... helping people honor endings, beginnings, and the spaces in between in meaningful and embodied ways.

Presented by Day Schildkret, an award-winning queer author, artist, ritualist, teacher. He has worked with thousands of individuals, communities and organizations to help heal the culture through a meaningful and creative response to marking personal and collective change. Author of *Hello, Goodbye: 75 Rituals for Times of Loss, Celebration and Change*, and, *Morning Altars: A 7-Step Practice to Nourish Your Spirit through Nature, Art and Ritual*.



Sponsored by The Natural Transitions Institute

Registration (\$33.):

<https://www.naturaltransitions.org/offers/LXivEVjF/>

Saturday, June 13, 1:00-3:00 pm EDT

Date with Death Club: Owning Your Dying

Part of Series: Planning Your Journey Through End of Life:
Documents, Your Wishes, Your Legacy, Letting Others

Are you interested in death? Maybe you want to grapple with your mortality with less fear and more curiosity, with less euphemism and more reality, and with less conformity and more creativity. Created by UU Karen G. Johnston, the DwDC explores mortality in community.

It's an opportunity to learn, share, and deepen your own understanding of what death means to you and how you want to approach death -- particularly your own. Informed by spiritual sensibilities, but no specific religious dogma,

Registration (free):

<https://fucb.breezechms.com/form/48fc6e>

(Hybrid event in person and via Zoom)

Thursday, June 18 , 11:30 am-1:00 pm EDT

Men and Grief: Supporting Men Through Loss

Men and women often experience and express grief in different ways. While these differences can sometimes create misunderstandings, they don't have to divide us.

In this webinar, we will explore how grief shows up differently and what those differences can teach us. Grief is deeply personal, and there is no "right" or "wrong" way to grieve. Each person's experience is as unique as they are. Still, recognizing common patterns can help us better understand and support one another.

Men often tend to think their way through grief, while women are more likely to feel their way through it. This can sometimes lead to the perception that men are less emotional or reluctant to share their feelings. In reality, many men have been conditioned to honor the pain of loss privately, often suppressing or hiding their emotions. As a result, when men and women try to communicate about grief, they may feel as though they are speaking entirely different languages.

Together, we will explore the roots of these differences and how to replace expectations and judgment with understanding and compassion. You'll gain practical, heart-centered tools to better support the men in your life as they navigate loss.

Hosted by AARP Texas



Registration (free):

<https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-618-Grief/regProcessStep1?i=MH-tR-fME6O2O0RpPNeVw&rp=2e6b9822-cec6-4867-bf5c-73004a8cfdcf>

Tuesday, June 23, 2:00 pm EDT

Reflections: A Conversation about Choice at End of Life

Join CurePSP and Mission MSA for a sensitive conversation about Medical Aid in Dying (MAID), an end-of-life option that people living with Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP), Corticobasal Degeneration (CBD), and Multiple System Atrophy (MSA) may consider. The session will feature a presentation by Lonny Shavelson, MD, and Thailia DeWolf, RN, CHPN, from the Academy of Aid-in-Dying Medicine, followed by a panel discussion. The panel will include former care partners of individuals with PSP and MSA, who will share their personal experiences and perspectives.

Presented by Mission MSA and Corps C U R E P S P

Registration (free):

[https://missionmsa.org/education/
#upcoming-events](https://missionmsa.org/education/#upcoming-events)



Tuesday, June 23, 8:00-9:30 pm EDT

One Day It Will Be Otherwise - Mussar Approaches to Death and Dying

Intellectually we know that one day it will indeed be “otherwise,” as the poet Jane Kenyon writes, but what might it mean to live more fully into that knowledge? Mussar is an ancient Jewish tradition (as a body of literature, and as a movement) that asks how a more considered awareness of our mortality might help us to not only soften to ourselves but also to be more awake to others around us. Join us as we explore these questions and more, through conversation and text study of traditional and contemporary mussar texts.

Presented by Rabbi Joshua Boettiger, author of the forthcoming *To Imagine Other Solitudes*. He is the *Rosh Yeshiva* (Head of School) at the Center for Contemporary Mussar, and the Jewish Chaplain at Bard College in New York’s Hudson River Valley, where he also teaches.



Sponsored by the Jewish Association for Death Education

Registration (free):

<https://luma.com/99uqg35n>



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